

HOPE & POSSIBILITIES

JUST OVER THE HORIZON



IT'S NEVER
TOO EARLY
OR TOO LATE
TO CREATE
THE LIFE OF YOUR
DREAMS!

MEGAN DI MARTINO

DEDICATION

**This book is dedicated to my daughters,
Megan and Jill, who are the most important gifts and loves of my life.
You both have been my greatest teachers, motivators and inspirations.**

**To My Heart Sisters. To Jackie, Beverly, Mary, and the YaYa's.
We have traveled many miles together. Without your
unconditional love and encouragement, I would not be here
today to share God's message of Hope & Infinite Possibilities.**

I love, respect and admire you all!

Megan ♥

*For I know the plans I have for you,”
declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you
and not to harm you, plans to give you hope
and a future.*

JEREMIAH 29:11

Hope & Possibilities
Just Over the Horizon
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Printed in the United States of America

INTRODUCTION

I never set out to write a book. Over the years I have thought about it but it seemed so daunting. I knew there were books I could write that would benefit people, both for consumers and for business professionals. But I really didn't know where to begin.

Then God came near and gave me a directive, "write your story." It all began at the dawn of September 29, 2011. My husband Paul Matthew Tyler had gone home to heaven a few hours earlier. I had been alone with Paul when he left quietly.

Paul was a shell of himself when his spirit left this earth. He had battled a brutal form of dementia for almost two years. I had to make the heartbreaking decision to put him in nursing home care. I wanted to care for Paul myself but he wasn't sleeping which meant I wasn't sleeping. If I dozed off, he would get into things that were potentially dangerous.

I vowed that at the end of his journey I would bring him home from the facility so he could pass peacefully.

In June 2011 he came home with hospice care. It was a peaceful time for Paul and myself. I had several ladies assist me with him during the day. He wasn't eating well and was getting very weak. Even though he was so weak he wasn't ready to let go.

During the evening of September 28th while lying in bed next to him I played Mercy Me's song, "I Can Only Imagine" over and over all through the night.

*"I can only imagine what it will be like
When I walk by your side
I can only imagine what my eyes will see
When your face is before me
I can only imagine I can only imagine"*

I whispered in his ear that Jesus was waiting for him on the golden streets of heaven. In the early morning hours, he finally let go.

I lay down on the couch in the living room for some much-needed rest but I really couldn't sleep. As the dawn emerged, I got up and went into the kitchen.

As I sat at the kitchen table, I couldn't believe what I saw out the window. The backyard was full of white butterflies. It was a surreal experience. I knew it was a life changing moment in time.

I put my head down on the cold kitchen table and asked God what was He saying to me. As I lifted my head, I heard a quiet voice in my spirit say, "write your story."

I questioned, what story? Tonight's story? My life's story? There were no immediate answers to my questions on direction.

After Paul's passing, I jumped back into my Spa business. Paul's long illness took a toll on the business and it needed a refocus on my part.

I eventually launched Medical Spa services. This was my plan before Paul became ill. I never forgot what God put in my spirit the morning of Paul's passing, "write your story".

And so, I did.

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CHAPTER 1

The Exploration Begins

I was a little girl who loved to explore.

My explorations began in Freeport, Long Island, a town near the fishing docks that went out into the Atlantic Ocean. I would go there with my father to have clams after he finished work. We would go to Bill's Clam Shack. I didn't love the clams, but I loved being with my Dad who always shared his "Over the Horizon" dreams with me.

My grandparents were Italian immigrants. My grandfather came to New York City at 16 years of age and eventually became a barber at the McAlpin Hotel close to where Madison Square Garden is today. The McAlpin Hotel was in the Theatre District. My grandfather was very creative and became a very experienced stylist too, doing the Ziegfeld Follies performers. Eventually he moved he and his family to Freeport and opened his own barber shop across from the Long Island Railroad Station. This train took commuters to NYC daily and they would stop in for a straight razor shave before going to the city to work.

As razor shaves became obsolete, my innovative grandfather transitioned his barber shop to a women's hair salon. He provided haircuts and perms including the trendy finger waves that were so popular in the 1930's. He also offered full-service salon treatments including manicures. He was way ahead of his time. The American dream was not just a dream to my family. It was a reality.

My family often took the train into the city on Sunday's after church to explore the shops below Houston Street. Today it is known as SoHo. Many of these shops were owned by the Jewish Orthodox merchants who spoke with an accent much like my grandparents. My father loved going to Pearl and Orchard Streets where he could strike up a great bargain.

Occasionally we would go see a Broadway Show Matinee or visit the museums.

Some- times we would even enjoy a “fancy” meal in the theatre district!

One of my favorite local adventures was to go to the butcher shop near our home in Freeport. My Mother would give me a few dollars to pick up our evening meal. Sometimes she would give me a little extra change to take my brother with me and to get him candy at a small grocery store across Main Street. I was so proud that she trusted me to cross the busy street.

While at the grocery store getting candy, I met the magical little brown girls who lived on the other side of Main Street. They would sing and skillfully jump double-dutch jump rope on the side street by the store. They asked me to join in with them and I gladly accepted. I couldn't sing like they could, but I sure could keep the beat.

I loved going into the city. It was always so intriguing and stimulating to my imagination. It was here that I started my love affair with design ... both Fashion and Interior design. Perhaps the fashion love affair came from my mother, the daughter of Irish and German Immigrants, who was an amazing seamstress. She sewed all my Sunday and Holiday “special” coats and dresses. During the week I wore my school uniforms to the local Catholic School, so my Mother's creations were my most prized possessions. Like my First Communion dress. They made me feel like a very special little girl.

Everything changed when the family moved from Freeport, the “Blue Collar” town on the South Shore of Long Island to Old Brookville, a “Blue Blood” area on the North Shore. I went from lemonade stands and tree forts to estates and country clubs. The days of riding our bikes to school and crossing Main Street were over.

We moved to the North Shore because my younger brother was not reading well and the nuns at the Catholic School suggested that he needed additional support. My parents felt that the public schools on the North Shore would offer that extra help.

Our new home was on a private pebble road with three homes. They all had manicured lawns and sat on five acres. This was very different from Freeport.

CHAPTER 2

The Young Explorers

On the first day of public school in 1960 I was going into 6th grade. I was thrilled to be in a pretty dress and shoes and not my uniform. I was also very excited to be getting on a school bus, going to town to the public school, and meeting new children on this new adventure.

While waiting for the bus at the end of the private road the children from the other homes were waiting for their school buses too. They were not going to the public school though. They were going to something called a “private” school. While waiting one girl came up to me and told me that my parents didn’t love me because the school that I was going to had “Jews and niggers.” I had no idea what she was talking about because I never heard those words before.

The bus came and 10 minutes later I met Jackie, who would become one of my best friends for life who happened to be Jewish. For the next six years I went to many Jewish Holiday Dinners with my friend’s beautiful family in their amazing Mid-Century Modern home. My friend and her family came to my home for Christmas Eve and other Holiday dinners too! Jackie became my comrade. We explored together all aspects of growing from childhood to our teen years. Boys became a big part of this exploration.

One of the things that bonded Jackie and I was that we lived 15 miles from town. We lived across a farm from each other. We spent many days crossing Youngs Farm to get to each other’s homes. We would plot and plan our lives while crossing through the corn fields.

The first year of high school I left public school and went to a regional all girls Catholic high school. My mother thought I was getting too boy crazy and needed the nuns! I thought my life was over.

The unexpected surprise was that I had the best of both worlds! I had Jackie

and all my friends from the public school and lots of new friends, “Our Lady of Mercy Girls,” from all over Long Island.

It was an amazing time to grow up on Long Island. The beach was a huge part of Life. It was 1964. As a teen on Long Island there was so much freedom available. I could hop on the train to New York City and experience adventures galore!

One day a friend and I took the train to Shea Stadium and saw the Beatles! Music was a huge part of my young life...All kinds of music...Mo Town, The Supremes, The Four Tops, The Temptations, Peter Paul and Mary, The Beach Boys, Simon and Garfunkel, and of course, The Four Seasons. I saw all of these groups in concert!

CHAPTER 3

“The Times They Are A Changing”

In 1968 change was stirring. As Bob Dylan said “The Times They Are A Changing.” I was a senior in high school. It was in the Spring when both Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy were assassinated. My parents were devastated. You could feel the change coming.

I graduated from High School in the Spring of 1968. I was dreaming of being a Fashion Designer. I wanted to go to FIT, The Fashion Institute of Technology, but my parents wanted me to go to a Catholic College and receive a liberal arts degree. I decided to go to Marymount College in Arlington, Virginia. Marymount had a very good Fashion Department reputation.

My high school years are full of fond memories of my mother and I creating special occasion coats and dresses. We also designed all my prom and “party dresses”. We would take patterns apart and create a sleeve from this pattern, a bodice from another, to make beautiful unique creations. We became quite good at this. I was honing my design skills.

As I was preparing to go to college all of my stability in life was collapsing. Jackie, my best friend from public school had moved the year before to California. My older siblings had married. My younger brother went to boarding school to help with his reading challenges and my parents sold our home on the private road. They were moving into Manhattan to live. I had no “Home” to go back to. I was beginning to feel lost. I couldn’t find my North Star. My compass was getting shaky.

Things in our country were getting very tense that summer. The Vietnam War was escalating. There were riots at the Democratic Presidential Convention that summer in Chicago. In Washington DC, where I was going to go to college, there was marching in the streets.

When I got to college, I learned that the “Cool” thing to do was to “March” in DC, then go to a dorm of one of the college boys, smoke pot, and listen to music. What’s Pot??? I had no idea what it was! In High School the recreational libation was beer or maybe a Singapore Sling on the beach at a party. This was a new world to me.

It felt like the ground around me was shaking. There was nothing familiar to hold onto. I was very uncomfortable.

Even school was disappointing. I was in a dorm that was an annex from the freshmen dorm. There were 20 girls in the annex but we all felt separated from campus life. Academically there weren’t any design or art classes the 1st year. Just the college basics. I was so desperate that Philosophy became my favorite class!

This was the season Jay appeared. He was the cousin of a friend from high school. I had met Jay’s parents while I was in high school while they were visiting my friend’s family home. Jay’s parents had an interior design business. How exciting!

I had never met Jay during high school. He had been in college at Notre Dame. He graduated that June and was in DC for a training program with IBM.

He was nice looking but very quiet. He enjoyed hanging out with me and my girlfriends from college. Actually, he seemed to appreciate it since us girls did all the talking. I was comfortable with him because of the familiarity of my friend and his amazing mother, the interior designer.

CHAPTER 4

The Summer of Monumental Change

Summer came. I went to New York to my parent's new apartment and started a job at Lord and Taylor as an Intern in a Buyers Training Program.

I loved the job but didn't like living with my parents and having no friends around to share New York City with after work.

Jay asked me to take the train to Westchester to his parent's home. I jumped at the chance to be with his parents and his extended Italian Family in their awesome Mid-Century Modern Home!

My visits became more and more frequent and my father was not happy that I was out every night.

As the summer went on, I got to know a coworker who invited me to go to a Music Festival that was going to be in upstate New York. I wanted to go so badly. "Woodstock" was going to be in Mid-August. I knew my parents would not let me go so I avoided asking them.

During the summer when Jay would drive me home to the city, he spoke about getting married! I told him I wasn't interested and that I had plans of a career in Fashion or Interior Design. I shared that I was not going back to Marymount but was going to go to The Fashion Institute of Technologies in NYC.

I was beginning to put this plan together. I shared it with my boss at Lord and Taylor in Designer Sportswear. Mrs. Letty Pepar. She encouraged me to stay at Lord and Taylor with her and to finish my college studies at The Fashion Institute of Technologies. (FIT) She was a major inspiration in my young career path.

As Woodstock was approaching, I finally asked my father if I could go. He blew up and we had a contentious dialog about me going to Westchester every night.

Not only did he not allow me to go to Woodstock, he also said I could only go to Westchester three nights a week.

This was the “Arc” ...the turning point that changes my life forever.

My foundation was no longer there to lean on. Everything I knew about who I was and what I wanted was in question. I had lost my vision. I knew on some level that I wanted a career in design, but I also wanted stability.

The next day I made a decision based on my confusion. I was desperately trying to create stability in my life. With that motivation I called Jay from a pay phone on 5th Avenue across from Lord and Taylor. I told him if he wanted to get married, I was in.

On August 12, 1969 on my 19th Birthday we got married at the White Plains, NY Court House. Having barely kissed him, we were now married! We told no one. During my birthday dinner at my parent’s apartment that evening, I told my parents that Jay and I wanted to get married.

Strangely, that seemed a better idea to my father than Woodstock had been! He said I was too young but Jay’s resume was good...good job and great family. The only problem he saw was that Jay would not look him in the eye. This was a warning I should have listened to.

CHAPTER 5

The Next Chapter as a Married Lady

On October 25th, 1969 Jay and I got married publicly at Our Lady of Peace Church in NYC. My mother and I designed and created my wedding dress. It was the highlight of the wedding for me.

Our honeymoon was a disaster. We flew to Europe and went to multiple cities. Jay did not walk with me or talk with me. I rode in the back of the car and read. What a way to spend a honeymoon!

From the beginning I knew the marriage was a mistake. I did not know what to do, so I just moved on and kept putting one foot in front of the other. I knew I had to remember my dream. To create. Somehow.

When we returned from the honeymoon, I commuted to the city on the 8:03 train to Manhattan for my job at Lord and Taylor. I was starting FIT in January. I was excited.

One morning on the 8:03 my dream to attend FIT came to a screeching halt. My dream shifted to a new plan when I felt sick to my stomach. Yes, I was pregnant. In May of 1970 my first daughter Megan was born.

I put my heart and soul into this little girl and was creating a home.

In 1973 we moved to Ridgefield, Connecticut. This small New England town saved my life.

We only had one car and lived 10 miles from the center of town. One day I said to my- self, “enough is enough. Get off the couch of depression and create a new life”. I then read in the local paper about a group called the New Comer’s Club. I wanted to go and meet women and begin to explore the town and start this new chapter of my life. My husband was in a car pool and occasionally I had the car to

use. I knew I could make this work, and I did!

One fateful day I met one of the most important friends of my adult life at a Newcomers function. Beverly and I set out on a mission to meet and make other friends. During this season we met other women and formed a group of friends. We have created a lasting bond with these women that is just as strong today as it was then. These are my “YaYa’s”!

We were all beginning this chapter in our lives as young married women and mothers. They were all a few years older than me. But I fit in! We all loved to explore! Family and our children, our homes (interior design), cooking, the holidays, entertaining and exploring in the city were some of our foundational connections, and they still are. They gave me unconditional love and encouragement to be me. Hallelujah!

CHAPTER 6

Planting the Creation Seeds

I needed to start working again. I did not have any extra money for me or my daughter. I again created a plan. I would go to the Bloomingdales in Stamford, Connecticut, my favorite store near Ridgefield. I was going to seek a part time job.

The seeds for my career dream were planted while working at Bloomingdales. I began to work evenings and Saturdays when my husband could watch my daughter. I was offered a job working in the Cosmetic Department where I found a new love, Skin Care, Cosmetics and assisting the people I came in contact with for their” beauty” needs!

This job was with BIBA cosmetics from London. Bloomingdales had an exclusive contract with BIBA. It was a very unique program. Instead of being in the cosmetic department, it was positioned in the main corridor just outside of the Junior department. I was trained by the makeup artists from BIBA. It was exciting! During this time, I said to myself, “Someday I am going to create a cosmetic line and bring it to all ages.”! I began to see over the horizon. I loved this job!

At this same time several of the YaYa’s were having their second child and I thought it would be a positive step to expand our family. I loved being a mother and wanted my daughter not to be an only child. I always wanted a second child. Family has always been very important to me. In 1975 I had my second daughter, Jill. Instead of helping my marriage it only made matters worse. I now had 2 children to navigate with only one car.

These two little girls were creating my North Star. My purpose.

CHAPTER 7

I Needed Wheels

Again, I needed to earn additional money for my daughters and my additional needs. Jay paid the basic bills but nothing more.

In the summer of 1976, I attended my first Tupperware party. The sales person shared that Managers received a Ford LTD station wagon. I didn't know anything about plastic bowls, but I knew I needed a car! That summer I began selling Tupperware and in 6 months I became a manager and received my car.

Tupperware was another pivotal growing learning experience. I now knew that if I put my mind to anything, I could accomplish the task at hand.

The Tupperware Corporation had a very solid training program. During this season I learned marketing and team building. I grew my Tupperware unit called "The Mega- phones", to one of the strongest units in the Southern Connecticut region. I learned that building others was very gratifying and something that I excelled in.

**“I had gone from
Survival to Stability”**

Zig Ziglar

CHAPTER 8

Strength from Within

As my 30th birthday was approaching I knew that I could not avoid the inevitable. I could not continue to live my life alone in a marriage. I made a very difficult decision to leave Tupperware. I now had purchased my own car. I knew I needed to work on getting myself and my family ready for a very difficult transition. In July 1980 I divorced my husband.

I knew by this point as my father always said, that opportunities were just “Over the Horizon”. I had hope and knew that there were infinite possibilities open to me. I just had to take that next step.

After my divorce I was commuting to NYC and was working for a promotional advertising company in sales. I was growing and enjoyed the job. But, commuting to the city daily with 2 children was very difficult.

So, 1982 I did one of the most difficult things in my life. I moved with my daughters from my beloved Ridgefield, Connecticut and left my YaYas who were my support system. We moved to the Eastern end of Long Island where my father had his business.

My father had been wanting me to join the family business and work with them. He wanted to add new products to the Beauty Division.

He had been manufacturing end wraps for perming since the 50's. As children while he was creating his first company selling end wraps to salons, the four Di Martino kids were packing end wrap boxes in our basement. My introduction to the entrepreneurial spirit.

It was now the 80's and perms were big! His company also manufactured disposable paper products for the medical and dental industries.

Although the move was difficult for me and the girls, it was a wonderful career opportunity. I was able to learn the mechanics of my father's business that would lead to my career in the Professional Beauty Industry.

In the Spring of 1983, my family was settling into to the Eastern end of Long Island after a rocky beginning for my older daughter. She started a new school in the Spring that suited her better than the local public school. She was finally happy.

CHAPTER 9

He Said He Loved Me

Also, that Spring an old friend from high school heard that I was divorced. He called me one evening out of the blue. We spoke for hours. He then got in his car from the Washington, D.C. area and drove to Long Island. He walked in as the sun was rising.

He shared with me that he had always loved me. That when he had called me before I got married, he wanted to tell me of his love but never did. He carried my high school photo with him always. He showed me the tattered photo. It was very lovely and special. To know that love was possible with someone that I truly liked and admired. There was hope I thought.

He proposed to me that night! I said to him, "Let's take this slow and really get to know each other." Also, I have two children. He thought that was a bonus.

For the next several months we spent all available time together. He included the girls. But, as he discovered the reality and the responsibility of a family, he started to pull away. Over the July 4th weekend he told me he had met someone else. My heart was broken.

CHAPTER 10

The First Big Step

I threw my heart and soul into building my career and caring for my beautiful daughters. My heart was closed. I vowed it would never open again.

It was a very exciting time of growth in the USA and the Professional Beauty Industry. I began to travel nationally for my family's business. I had developed a disposable towel for the Nail Industry which was used while applying acrylic nails. The Nail Industry and unique Hair Care product companies were being introduced during this time such as Aveda, Paul Mitchell and OPI.

I never forgot my desire to create skin care and cosmetic products. God came near.

I was offered a job to move to Ft Worth, Texas and work with a new division of Alcon Laboratories. I loved going to Texas on business. I loved the people and the uniqueness of Texas. I was ready for another adventure.

In 1987 I accepted the position of National Sales and Marketing director for their hair care product division. My younger daughter and I moved to Ft Worth, Texas while my older daughter stayed on Long Island to finish her senior year of high school.

My time at Alcon-J Cannon Inc was very fruitful. I was able to work with very knowledgeable chemists and learn about skin care product formulations. Alongside my boss we repackaged and re positioned many hair care products. As time went on it was very apparent that they were not interested in doing a skin care line which is one reason I took the job offer.

While working there I was privy to cutting edge information and learned the science of Glycolic Acid and the Alpha Hydroxy Fruit Acid Family of ingredients. They were to create the first generation of result-oriented skin care.

In 1991 I left my position to create and prepare to launch my own Skin Care brand. During this year of preparation, I sold Jaguars at Over Seas Motors in Ft Worth Texas to pay the bills. I also took several free-lance marketing jobs as well.

CHAPTER 11

Finally

1992 was a formidable year. I gave my heart to Jesus, my new love, and I created and launched my first line of skin care products, Glycolique.

Glycolique was one of the pioneers in Glycolic Acid Products sold to salons throughout the US. I knew the products had to work and show results. And they did!

Good news, bad news. Glycolique shot off like a rocket but I was very undercapitalized. I learned a lot about beginning, building and sustaining a business very quickly. I held on and it flourished. Glycolique was considered a leading innovator in skin care products in the Professional Beauty Industry.

Glycolique was selling well over 1 Million in sales when I sold it to the lab that manufactured the line. I ran the division for them for a year.

I began again. In 1997, I launched Novita Spa Clinical Products. Novita is an Italian word. It means New Birth, New Life...Always Something New!

CHAPTER 12

My Heart

My Mother and Father in Law remained very close with me and my daughters after the divorce. My ex-husband moved away and rarely saw his parents or daughters.

By the early 2000's my mother in law was in the later stages of Alzheimer's Disease. In 2003 my father in law asked me for help. My younger daughter had married and moved to Austin, TX in 2002. We all felt the Austin area was a better fit for my in-laws than Ft. Worth where I was living and had my office and warehouse for Novita Spa Clinical products. During Christmas of 2003 my in laws purchased a home in Georgetown, TX just outside of Austin.

I was looking to open a Novita Spa in Ft Worth but I also knew I needed to be involved with the care of my friend and mentor, my mother in law, Rose.

God moved the furniture again.

In 2004, as a licensed Aesthetician, I opened the first Novita Spa in Georgetown, TX. It was a one room Aesthetic Studio in a hair salon. I drove back and forth from Ft Worth.

I started planting seeds in Georgetown for the future Novita Spa on the Square. In 2005 I moved to Georgetown, Texas and I opened the doors of The Novita Spa on the Square, and it has been evolving ever since. I wanted to use the skills and knowledge I had acquired to train and mentor my staff for their career success, and "Clinical Excellence with a Special Pampering Attitude" was born! Since 2010 The Novita Spa has been voted Best Day Spa in Georgetown, Texas.

In the winter of 2004 at a local restaurant, while dining alone I met Paul. Paul was 19 years my senior, had bright blue eyes, and had a larger than life personality. He loved the Lord and admired and respected all that I had accomplished. We

started hanging out. Two years later, when he asked me to marry him, I resisted. But I knew in my heart that it was what God had for my life.

Early December of 2006 we married with friends and family at our side. It was a great time of celebration! Several weeks later just after Christmas my mother in law Rose went home to be with the Lord.

Paul and I enjoyed helping and loving people at The Novita Spa on the Square together, however, this period was short lived. In December of 2009 Paul had a stroke and suffered for two years with Lewy Body Dementia before going home to heaven. God knew that Paul's love and respect would heal my heart and that I would care for him in his greatest time of need.

This a story of love. Love for family, friends, and self. It is a story of empathy and forgiveness. It is a story of Faith. This is a story of Hope and Infinite Possibilities...Just Over the Horizon that comes with knowing and trusting God.

***“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.
And in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.”***

PROVERBS 3:5-6

Don't stop. Keep going. Follow your heart and passion and always share that with others. *It's never too early or too late to create the life of your dreams.* Take the first step...The second and third step will be revealed to you!

*“The call to new beginnings is ringing in the air.
It’s reaching through the mist of circumstances everywhere.
Stand tall, take the first step.
The second and third step will be revealed to you.”*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Megan Di Martino is a New York girl in the heart of Texas!

She is a creator of beauty and has encouraged and mentored women for over 30 years.

Megan has developed two award-winning skin care lines. Her business, Novita Spa and Medical Rejuvenation Clinic was voted Best of Georgetown for nine consecutive years.

Megan is a transformational speaker, sharing her message of encouragement to businesses, organizations, and women's groups internationally.



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HOPE & POSSIBILITIES

JUST OVER THE HORIZON

From the beaches of Long Island to the Beatles, with Woodstock in the air, Megan takes you on her adventure from innocence, to single motherhood, to the creation of two 7 figure businesses.

Meagan DiMartino is a true mid-century modern girl, who captures the heart of every reader with her story of hope and possibilities.

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